

Isaiah 60:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.

Analysis

God contrasts past and future: "Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee." This describes exile's desolation—abandoned, despised, avoided. Jerusalem was a wasteland, bypassed by travelers. The Hebrew azubah (forsaken) and senuah (hated) emphasize complete rejection. Then comes the glorious reversal: "I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations." Gaon olam (eternal excellency) means everlasting pride/glory—permanent honor replacing temporary shame. "A joy of many generations" (mesos dor vador) emphasizes perpetual gladness across time. From a Reformed perspective, this illustrates the believer's transformation. Once forsaken in sin, hated by God's justice, avoided by holiness—now, through Christ, made eternally excellent, a source of joy to God (Zephaniah 3:17) and across generations. The church, once not a people, becomes God's people (1 Peter 2:9-10). Individual believers, once dead in sin, become new creations (2 Corinthians 5:17). This transformation is eternal, not temporary—secured by Christ's finished work.

Historical Context

The Babylonian exile left Jerusalem desolate for 70 years—truly forsaken and hated, avoided by travelers who saw only ruins. Even after the return, the city remained relatively insignificant until Christ's time. The prophecy looked beyond physical Jerusalem to the spiritual reality: the church, once composed of alienated

sinners, now eternal in excellency through Christ. This continues as the church spans generations, bringing joy through gospel proclamation and sanctification.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does the transformation from 'forsaken and hated' to 'eternal excellency' describe conversion?
2. What does it mean that the church is 'a joy of many generations'?
3. How does Christ's work secure our 'eternal excellency' rather than temporary improvement?

Interlinear Text

Whereas	H1961	thou hast been forsaken	H5800	and hated	H369
	H8478		H8130		
so that no man went through	H5674	thee I will make	H7760	excellency	H1347
generations	H1755			thee an eternal	H5769
				a joy	H4885
generations	H1755				

Additional Cross-References

Isaiah 61:7 (Eternal Life): For your shame ye shall have double; and for confusion they shall rejoice in their portion: therefore in their land they shall possess the double: everlasting joy shall be unto them.

Jeremiah 30:17 (Parallel theme): For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the LORD; because they called thee an Outcast, saying, This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.

Jeremiah 33:11 (Parallel theme): The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 35:10 (Eternal Life): And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Revelation 11:2 (Parallel theme): But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

Isaiah 6:12 (Parallel theme): And the LORD have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land.

Isaiah 65:18 (Parallel theme): But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.

Isaiah 4:2 (Parallel theme): In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.